

Chapter 1 : Indigenous Peoples: North America | Multnomah County Library

The indigenous peoples of the Americas are the pre-Columbian peoples of the Americas and their descendants. Although some indigenous peoples of the Americas were traditionally hunter-gatherers—and many, especially in the Amazon basin, still are—many groups practiced aquaculture and agriculture.

Population history of indigenous peoples of the Americas and Columbian Exchange Cultural areas of North America at time of European contact The European colonization of the Americas fundamentally changed the lives and cultures of the native peoples of the continents. The majority of these losses are attributed to the introduction of Afro-Eurasian diseases into the Americas. Epidemics ravaged the Americas with diseases such as smallpox, measles, and cholera, which the early colonists and African slaves brought from Europe. The disease spread was slow initially, as Europeans were poor vectors for transferring the disease due to their natural exposure. This changed with the mass importation of Western and Central Africans slaves, who like the Native Americans lacked any resistances to the diseases of Europe and Northern Africa. These two groups were able to maintain a population large enough for diseases such as smallpox to spread rapidly amongst themselves. By 1520, the disease had spread throughout South America and had arrived at the Plata basin. European colonists perpetrated massacres on the indigenous groups and enslaved them. Two months later, after consultation with the Audencia of Santo Domingo, Enriquillo was offered any part of the island to live in peace. The Laws of Burgos, 1513, were the first codified set of laws governing the behavior of Spanish settlers in America, particularly with regard to native Indians. The laws forbade the maltreatment of natives and endorsed their conversion to Catholicism. Drawing accompanying text in Book XII of the 16th-century Florentine Codex compiled 1528, showing Nahuas of conquest-era central Mexico suffering from smallpox Various theories for the decline of the Native American populations emphasize epidemic diseases, conflicts with Europeans, and conflicts among warring tribes. Among the various contributing factors, epidemic disease was the overwhelming cause of the population decline of the American natives. Smallpox was only the first epidemic. Typhus probably in 1518, influenza and smallpox together in 1519, smallpox again in 1520, diphtheria in 1521, measles in 1522—all ravaged the remains of Inca culture. Smallpox killed millions of native inhabitants of Mexico. After the land bridge separated the human populations of the Old World and the New World, the Native Americans lost many of the immunities their ancestors possessed. In addition, Europeans acquired many diseases, like cow pox, from domestication of animals that the Native Americans did not have access to. While Europeans adapted to these diseases, there was no way for Native Americans to acquire those diseases and build up resistances to them. Finally, many of the European diseases that were brought over to the Americas were diseases, like yellow fever, that were relatively manageable if infected as a child, but were deadly if infected as an adult. Children could survive the disease and that individual would have immunity to the disease for the rest of their life. Upon contact with the adult populations of Native Americans, these childhood diseases were very fatal. Their culture was destroyed by 1492. Only had survived by the year 1492, though the bloodlines continued through to the modern populace. In Amazonia, indigenous societies weathered, and continue to suffer, centuries of colonization and genocide. As it had done elsewhere, the virus wiped out entire population-groups of Native Americans. Some of these animals escaped and began to breed and increase their numbers in the wild. By domesticating horses, some tribes had great success:

Native North American Indigenous Knowledge Within the information landscape, the conceptual foundations of Native knowledge systems offer enormous potential for the advancement of research, teaching, and practice of library and information science.

See Article History North American Indian languages, those languages that are indigenous to the United States and Canada and that are spoken north of the Mexican border. A number of language groups within this area, however, extend into Mexico , some as far south as Central America. The present article focuses on the native languages of Canada, Greenland, and the United States. For further information on the native languages of Mexico and Central America, see Mesoamerican Indian languages. See also Eskimo-Aleut languages. The North American Indian languages are both numerous and diverse. At the time of first European contact, there were more than According to the Catalogue of Endangered Languages endangeredlanguages. Of these approximately languages, no longer have any native speakers i. The rich diversity of these languages provides a valuable laboratory for linguistics ; certainly, the discipline of linguistics could not have developed as it has, especially in the United States, without the contributions that have come from the study of Native American languages. In this article the present tense will be used in referring to both extinct and surviving languages. The North American Indian languages are so diverse that there is no feature or complex of features shared by all. At the same time, there is nothing primitive about these languages. They draw upon the same linguistic resources and display the same regularities and complexities as do the languages of Europe and elsewhere in the world. North American Indian languages have been grouped into 57 language families, including 14 larger language families, 18 smaller language families, and 25 language isolates languages with no known relatives, thus language families with but a single member language. Geographically, too, the diversity of some areas is notable. Thirty-seven families lie west of the Rocky Mountains , and 20 of those exist solely in California ; California alone thus shows more linguistic variety than all of Europe. These language families are independent of one another, and as of the second decade of the 21st century none can be shown to be related to any other. Numerous proposals have attempted to join some of them into larger groupings made up of families claimed to be remotely related to one another. Some of those proposals are plausible enough to merit further investigation, although several border on sheer speculation. It is possible that some, perhaps most, American Indian languages are related to one another but that they separated from one another so long ago and changed so much in the intervening time that available evidence is insufficient ever to demonstrate any relationship. A major problem has to do with the difficulty in distinguishing, at the deeper historical levels, between resemblances shared because of inheritance from a common ancestor and those from linguistic borrowing. In any case, no theory of common origin for the North American Indian languages has any serious following. Most anthropologists and linguists believe that North America was populated originally by people who migrated from Asia across the Bering Strait. There have been attempts to relate Native American languages to Asian languages, but none has gained general acceptance. The linguistic diversity of native North Americans suggests, indeed, that the area was populated as a result of at least three, possibly several, separate waves of migration from Asia. The languages they brought with them, however, have no discernible relatives in Asia. Classification The first comprehensive classification into families of the North American Indian languages was made in by the American John Wesley Powell , who based his study on impressionistic resemblances in vocabulary. The principle of nomenclature adopted by Powell has been widely used ever since: Various scholars have attempted to group the families into larger units that reflect deeper levels of historical relationship. Numerous other attempts were made to reduce the great diversity among American Indian languages to more-manageable schemes composed of fewer independent language families, but most of them have not proved successful. Perhaps the most famous among those attempts is the hypothesis proposed by American anthropologist and linguist Joseph H. The method upon which this proposal is based has proven inadequate, and the data adduced as evidence in its favour are highly flawed. The hypothesis is now abandoned among linguists. Though initially attractive, neither the lexical evidence with putative sound

correspondences nor the grammatical morphological evidence adduced in its favour is sufficient to support this proposed relationship. Language contact As elsewhere in the world, there has been language contact among many of the indigenous languages of North America. These languages show varying degrees of influence from other languages; i. There are a number of well-defined linguistic areas in which languages of diverse families came to share numerous structural characteristics through the process of borrowing. The best-known in North America is the Northwest Coast linguistic area, though there are also several others. In a few cases, situations of language contact have given rise to pidgins or trade languages. In a very few special circumstances, mixed languages developed, correlated with how new ethnic groups identified themselves. Michif is mixed where most nouns and adjectives and their pronunciation and grammar are French but the verbs are Plains Cree including their pronunciation and grammar. Most of the vocabulary of Mednyj Aleut is Aleut but the grammar of verbs is mostly Russian. Plains sign language was used for intertribal communication. The Kiowa were renowned as excellent sign talkers. Plains Crow are credited with disseminating sign language to others. The sign language became the lingua franca of the Plains, spreading as far as Alberta , Saskatchewan , and Manitoba. Contacts between American Indian groups and Europeans resulted in borrowed vocabulary, some groups borrowing very little from Europeans and others more; European languages also borrowed terms from Native American languages. The type and degree of linguistic adaptation to European culture has varied greatly among American Indian groups, depending on sociocultural factors. A large number of words for new items of acculturation were produced based on native wordsâ€™e. American Indian languages have contributed numerous words to European languages, especially names for plants, animals, and native culture items. From Algonquian languages English has the words caribou, chipmunk , hickory , hominy , moccasin , moose , mugwump , opossum , papoose, pemmican , persimmon , powwow , raccoon , sachem, skunk , squash , squaw, toboggan, tomahawk , totem , wickiup , and others; from Cahuilla, chuckawalla lizard ; from Chinook Jargon , cayuse ultimately European , muck-a-muck, potlatch , and others; from Costanoan , abalone ; from Dakota, tipi tepee ; from Eskimoan, igloo , kayak , mukluk; from Navajo , hogan ; from Salishan , coho salmon , sasquatch , sockeye salmon ; and others. Many place-names also owe their origins to Native American languages. A few examples are: Grammar The term grammatical structure as used here refers to both the traditional categories of morphology the grammatical pieces that make up words and syntax how words are combined into sentences. It should again be emphasized that in grammar , as well as in phonological or semantic structure, neither the American Indian languages nor any other languages in the world display anything that could be called primitive in the sense of underdeveloped or rudimentary. Every language is as complex, as subtle, and as efficient for all communicative needs as Latin , English , or any European language. In the examples following, the symbols that are not found in the Latin alphabet have been adopted from phonetic alphabets. The North American Indian languages display great diversity in grammar, so that there is no grammatical property whose presence or absence characterizes them as a group. At the same time, there are some characteristics that, though not unknown elsewhere in the world and not found in all American Indian languages, are sufficiently widespread to be associated with languages in the Americas. Polysynthesis, found in a considerable number of North American Indian language families, is one such trait. Polysynthesis is often thought to mean that these languages have very long words, but actually it refers to words that combine various meaningful pieces from affixation and compounding , where what is a single word translates as a whole sentence in European languages. An illustration from Yupik Eskimo-Aleut family is the single word kaipiallrulliniuk, made up of the pieces kaig-piar-llru-llini-u-k [be. Incorporation of a noun inside of a verb is not a productive grammatical feature of English though it can be seen in such frozen compounds as to babysit, to backstab but is common and productive in a number of Native American languagesâ€™e. In verbs, the person and number of the subject are commonly marked by prefixes or suffixesâ€™e. In nouns, possession is widely expressed by prefixes or suffixes indicating the person of the possessor. Many languages have inalienably possessed nouns, which cannot occur except in such possessed forms. The following grammatical features are less typically North American but are nevertheless distinctive of several areas: Most American Indian languages do not have cases as in noun declensions in Latin and Greek , but case systems do occur in some languages of California and the U. Some languages also have a distinction

in number between singular, dual, and plural nouns or pronouns. Reduplication, the repetition of all or part of a stem, is widely used to indicate distributed or repeated action of verbs; e. Verb forms also frequently specify the direction or location of an action by the use of prefixes or suffixes. Several languages, especially in the West, have instrumental prefixes on verbs that indicate the instrument involved in performing the action. Lastly, many languages have evidential forms of verbs that indicate the source or validity of the information reported. In several other languages verb forms consistently discriminate hearsay from eyewitness reports.

Phonology The languages of North America are as diverse in their systems of pronunciation as they are in other ways. For example, the languages of the Northwest Coast linguistic area are unusually rich in terms of the number of contrasting sounds phonemes. Tlingit has more than 50 phonemes 47 consonants and 8 vowels ; by contrast, Karuk has only English, in comparison, has about 35 of which about 24 are consonants. The consonants that are found in many North American Indian languages involve several phonetic contrasts generally not found in European languages. The Native American languages use the same phonetic mechanisms as other languages, but many of the languages also employ other phonetic traits as well. The glottal stop , an interruption of breath produced by closing the vocal cords such as the sound in the middle of English oh-oh! Glottalized consonants are fairly common in western North America, produced not by air from the lungs as are all English speech sounds but rather produced when the glottis is closed and raised so that the air trapped above the vocal cords is ejected when the closure in the mouth for that consonant is released. For example, many of the languages distinguish two types of sounds made with the back of the tongue a velar k, much like an English k, and a uvular q, produced farther back in the mouth. Labialized sounds, sounds with simultaneous lip-rounding, are also common. Thus, for example, Tlingit has 21 back phonemes velar or uvular alone: In comparison, English has only two sounds, k and g, made in this same general area of the mouth. North American Indian languages, especially in the West, often have different kinds of lateral l-like sounds where the airstream escapes around the sides of the tongue. Alongside the common lateral l, such as the l in English, many of these languages also have a voiceless counterpart like a whispered l or like blowing air around the sides of the tongue. Some have lateral affricates, like t and a voiceless l pronounced together, and some also add a glottalized lateral affricate. Navajo, for example, has a total of five lateral sounds that are distinguished from one another. In some American Indian languages, contrastive stress is significant in distinguishing words with different meanings as in the case of English a convert versus to convert. In many others the stress is fixed on a particular syllable of the word; e. High and low pitches are indicated with the acute and grave accents, respectively. A few languages use internal sound alternations to derive other words, similar to the case of English song from sing. It should be noted that, in languages generally, the meaning of a vocabulary item cannot necessarily be inferred from its historical origin or from the meaning of its parts. Vocabularies vary in terms of the number and type of things they designate. One language may make many specific discriminations in a particular semantic area, while another may just have a few general terms; the difference is correlated with the importance of the semantic area for the particular society. Thus, English is very specific in its vocabulary for bovine animals bull, cow, calf, heifer, steer, ox , even to the point of lacking a general cover term in the singular what is the singular of cattle?

Chapter 3 : North American Native Trees

(Francisco Pizarro) See also Portal: Indigenous peoples of North America - Columbian exchange - Mesoamerican writing systems - Native American Colorantes naturales dyed cloth in an iron pot.[42] Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Plateau in North America used lichen to dye corn husk bags a beautiful sea.

First Origins Source Paleolithic Era. Based on archeological evidence, students of Indian culture have drawn some limited conclusions about the origins of Native American government. During the Paleolithic or Paleo-Indian period, the era of Indian social development before b. Paleolithic Indians lived and hunted in very small groups and roamed over a widespread geographical area. Their political structure was, of necessity, limited and informal. In the earliest Native American societies the family was the primary social unit. Occasionally kinship groups or extended families joined together into bands, autonomous social and political units that lived, subsisted, and survived on their own. Bands were essentially egalitarian, meaning that most or all adult members participated in the process of making decisions for the group. Generally an adult male informally led the band. These leaders probably acquired their influence because of their proficiency as hunters. They did not have, however, any coercive authority over the rest of the members of the group. With the extinction of the mammoth, the subsistence methods of people became more diversified. Instead of relying solely on the large mammals for food, some native groups turned to the hunting of smaller animals or the gathering of plants, seeds, and fruits. Since flora and fauna varied across the continent, the lifestyles of people became more varied as groups adapted to subsist in the environment in which they lived. This period of diffusion and variation is known as the Archaic era b. Many groups during this period became somewhat less nomadic. Although most Archaic Indians continued to migrate from place to place, many settled into regional patterns of movement or tended to remain primarily in one specific area. Some groups, particularly in California and the Pacific Northwest, did establish permanent settlements because of the reliability and availability of the local food sources. In some areas Archaic Indians began to reside together in greater numbers. They also began to exhibit sophisticated coordination in their hunting and gathering expeditions. For example, archeologists have discovered evidence of the jump-kill technique of hunting, in which large numbers of hunters worked together as a unit to force large game over cliffs to their deaths. Similarly, in the Southwest groups of hunters constructed corrals to trap game. Some groups in the eastern half of North America also used the technique of controlled burning to revive the plants and deer population of the forests of their environment. The new growth that emerged after a clearing fire provided fresh supplies of fruits, berries, nuts, leaves, and roots. As a result the deer population expanded in the areas recently cleared by the controlled burning. These processes, which made hunting more productive, was another indication that the relationships between unrelated Indian peoples were becoming more complicated. Several other cooperative efforts emerged during this era. For instance, as Archaic people became more sedentary in some areas, they demonstrated a greater interest in how they disposed of the corpses of the deceased. In other words some Archaic peoples began to spend more time and effort on group mortuary rites. Coordinated trade efforts throughout many parts of North America also began during this period. The development of trade routes between native groups allowed innovations, ideas, and methods to be spread around the continent. Individual native groups developed distinctive religious beliefs, and traders spread these beliefs along the trade networks. Knowledge about agricultural production also began to be passed up from Mexico into North America during the late Archaic era. Social organization was thus becoming somewhat more complicated than it had been during the Paleolithic period. However, formal political organization continued to be quite limited. Archaic Indians apparently did not make class or status distinctions between themselves for political or social purposes. They also did not centralize political power into the hands of dominant leaders. Instead decisions probably continued to be made with the participation of the entire adult community through consultation and consensus. Alice Kehoe, North American Indians: Cite this article Pick a style below, and copy the text for your bibliography.

Chapter 4 : Mythologies of the indigenous peoples of the Americas - Wikipedia

Native American, also called American Indian, Amerindian, Amerind, Indian, aboriginal American, or First Nation person, member of any of the aboriginal peoples of the Western Hemisphere, although the term often connotes only those groups whose original territories were in present-day Canada and the United States.

Native Americans form an ethnic group only in a very general sense. In the East, centuries of coexistence with whites has led to some degree of intermarriage and assimilation and to various patterns of stable adjustment. In the West the hasty expansion of Native American culture areas Comparative studies are an essential component of all scholarly analyses, whether the topic under study is human society, fine art, paleontology, or chemistry; the similarities and differences found in the entities under consideration help to organize and direct research programs and exegeses. The comparative study of cultures falls largely in the domain of anthropology , which often uses a typology known as the culture area approach to organize comparisons across cultures. The culture area approach was delineated at the turn of the 20th century and continued to frame discussions of peoples and cultures into the 21st century. A culture area is a geographic region where certain cultural traits have generally co-occurred; for instance, in North America between the 16th and 19th centuries, the Northwest Coast culture area was characterized by traits such as salmon fishing, woodworking, large villages or towns, and hierarchical social organization. The specific number of culture areas delineated for Native America has been somewhat variable because regions are sometimes subdivided or conjoined. The 10 culture areas discussed below are among the most commonly used—the Arctic, the Subarctic, the Northeast, the Southeast, the Plains, the Southwest, the Great Basin, California, the Northwest Coast, and the Plateau. Notably, some scholars prefer to combine the Northeast and Southeast into one Eastern Woodlands culture area or the Plateau and Great Basin into a single Intermontane culture area. Each section below considers the location, climate, environment , languages, tribes, and common cultural characteristics of the area before it was heavily colonized. Prehistoric and post-Columbian Native American cultures are discussed in subsequent sections of this article. A discussion of the indigenous peoples of the Americas as a whole is found in American Indian. The Arctic This region lies near and above the Arctic Circle and includes the northernmost parts of present-day Alaska and Canada. The topography is relatively flat, and the climate is characterized by very cold temperatures for most of the year. Distribution of Arctic peoples. The Arctic peoples of North America relied upon hunting and gathering. Winters were harsh, but the long hours of summer sunlight supported an explosion of vegetation that in turn drew large herds of caribou and other animals to the inland North. On the coasts, sea mammals and fish formed the bulk of the diet. Small mobile bands were the predominant form of social organization; band membership was generally based on kinship and marriage see also Sidebar: The Difference Between a Tribe and a Band. Dome-shaped houses were common; they were sometimes made of snow and other times of timber covered with earth. Fur clothing, dog sleds, and vivid folklore, mythology, and storytelling traditions were also important aspects of Arctic cultures. The topography is relatively flat, the climate is cool, and the ecosystem is characterized by a swampy and coniferous boreal forest taiga ecosystem. Distribution of American Subarctic cultures. Their traditional languages are in the Athabaskan and Algonquian families. Small kin-based bands were the predominant form of social organization, although seasonal gatherings of larger groups occurred at favoured fishing locales. Moose, caribou, beavers, waterfowl, and fish were taken, and plant foods such as berries, roots, and sap were gathered. In winter people generally resided in snug semisubterranean houses built to withstand extreme weather; summer allowed for more mobility and the use of tents or lean-tos. Snowshoes, toboggans, and fur clothing were other common forms of material culture. See also American Subarctic peoples. The topography is generally rolling, although the Appalachian Mountains include some relatively steep slopes. The climate is temperate, precipitation is moderate, and the predominant ecosystem is the deciduous forest. There is also extensive coastline and an abundance of rivers and lakes. Distribution of Northeast Indians. The traditional languages of the Northeast are largely of the Iroquoian and Algonquian language families. Most Northeastern peoples engaged in agriculture, and for them the village of a few dozen to a few hundred persons was the most

important social and economic unit in daily life. Groups that had access to reliably plentiful wild foods such as wild rice, salmon, or shellfish generally preferred to live in dispersed hamlets of extended families. Several villages or hamlets formed a tribe, and groups of tribes sometimes organized into powerful confederacies. These alliances were often very complex political organizations and generally took their name from the most powerful member tribe, as with the Iroquois Confederacy. Cultivated corn, maize, beans, squash, and weedy seed-bearing plants such as *Chenopodium* formed the economic base for farming groups. All northeastern peoples took animals including deer, elk, moose, waterfowl, turkeys, and fish. Houses were wickiups, wigwams, or longhouses; both house types were constructed of a sapling framework that was covered with rush matting or sheets of bark. Other common aspects of culture included dugouts made of the trunks of whole trees, birchbark canoes, clothing made of pelts and deerskins, and a variety of medicine societies. See also Northeast Indian.

The Southeast This region reaches from the southern edge of the Northeast culture area to the Gulf of Mexico; from east to west it stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to somewhat west of the Mississippi valley. The climate is warm temperate in the north and grades to subtropical in the south. The topography includes coastal plains, rolling uplands known as the Piedmont, and a portion of the Appalachian Mountains; of these, the Piedmont was most densely populated. The predominant ecosystems were coastal scrub, wetlands, and deciduous forests. Distribution of Southeast American Indian cultures. Perhaps the best-known indigenous peoples originally from this region are the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole, sometimes referred to as the Five Civilized Tribes. Traditionally, most tribes in the Southeast spoke Muskogean languages; there were also some Siouan language speakers and one Iroquoian-speaking group, the Cherokee. Most people were commoners and lived in hamlets located along waterways. Each hamlet was home to an extended family and typically included a few houses and auxiliary structures such as granaries and summer kitchens; these were surrounded by agricultural plots or fields. Towns often included large earthen mounds on which religious structures and the homes of the ruling classes or families were placed. Together, each town and its associated hamlets constituted an autonomous political entity. In times of need these could unite into confederacies, such as those of the Creek and Choctaw. People grew corn, beans, squash, tobacco, and other crops; they also gathered wild plant foods and shellfish, hunted deer and other animals, and fished. House forms varied extensively across the region, including wickiups, wigwams, earth-berm dwellings, and, in the 19th century, chickees thatched roofs with open walls. See also Southeast Indian.

The Plains The Plains lie in the centre of the continent, spanning the area between the western mountains and the Mississippi River valley and from the southern edge of the Subarctic to the Rio Grande in present-day Texas. The climate is of the continental type, with warm summers and cold winters. Relatively flat short-grass prairies with little precipitation are found west of the Missouri River and rolling tallgrass prairies with more moisture are found to its east. Tree-lined river valleys form a series of linear oases throughout the region. Distribution of North American Plains Indians. The groups who built these communities divided their time between village-based crop production and hunting expeditions, which often lasted for several weeks and involved travel over a considerable area. By horses from the Spanish colonies in present-day New Mexico had become common in the Plains and had revolutionized the hunting of bison. This new economic opportunity caused some local villagers to become dedicated nomads, as with the Crow who retained close ties with their Hidatsa kin, and also drew agricultural tribes from surrounding areas into a nomadic lifestyle, including the Sioux, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Comanche, Arapaho, and Kiowa. Groups throughout the region had in common several forms of material culture, including the tepee, tailored leather clothing, a variety of battle regalia such as feathered headdresses, and large drums used in ritual contexts. The Sun Dance, a ritual that demanded a high degree of piety and self-sacrifice from its participants, was also found throughout most of the Plains. The Plains is perhaps the culture area in which tribal and band classifications were most conflated. See also Plains Indian.

The topography includes plateaus, basins, and ranges. The climate on the Colorado Plateau is temperate, while it is semitropical in most of the basin and range systems; there is little precipitation and the major ecosystem is desert. The landscape includes several major river systems, notably those of the Colorado and the Rio Grande, that create linear oases in the region. Distribution of Southwest Indians and their reservations and lands. The region was the home of both agricultural and hunting and gathering peoples, although the most common

lifeway combined these two economic strategies. Best known among the agriculturists are the Pueblo Indians , including the Zuni and Hopi. The Navajo and the many Apache groups usually engaged in some combination of agriculture, foraging, and the raiding of other groups. The major agricultural products were corn, beans, squash, and cotton. Wild plant foods, deer, other game, and fish for those groups living near rivers were the primary foraged foods. The Pueblo peoples built architecturally remarkable apartment houses of adobe and stone masonry see pueblo architecture and were known for their complex kinship structures, kachina katsina dances and dolls, and fine pottery, textiles, and kiva and sand paintings. Stone channels and check dams low walls that slowed the runoff from the sporadic but heavy rains were common throughout the Southwest, as were basketry and digging sticks. See also Southwest Indian. It is so named because the surrounding mountains create a bowl-like landscape that prevented water from flowing out of the region. The most common topographic features are basin and range systems; these gradually transition to high intermontane plateaus in the north. The climate is temperate in the north and becomes subtropical to the south. Higher elevations tend to receive ample moisture but other areas average as little as 2 inches 50 mm per year. The predominant ecosystem is desert. Distribution of Numic languages and major groups of Great Basin area Indians. The Great Basin is home to the Washoe, speakers of a Hokan language , and a number of tribes speaking Numic languages a division of the Uto-Aztecan language family. The peoples of this region were hunters and gatherers and generally organized themselves in mobile, kin-based bands. Some of these latter groups also replaced wickiups and brush shelters, the common house forms until that time, with Plains-style tepees ; peoples in the west and south, however, continued to use traditional house forms well into the 19th century. Other common forms of material culture included digging sticks, nets, basketry, grinding stones for processing seeds, and rock art. See also Great Basin Indian. California This culture area approximates the present states of California U. An extraordinary diversity of local conditions created microenvironments such as coasts, tidewaters, coastal redwood forests, grasslands, wetlands, high deserts, and mountains. Distribution of California Indians. Many California peoples eschewed centralized political structures and instead organized themselves into tribelets, groups of a few hundred to a few thousand people that recognized cultural ties with others but maintained their political independence. Some tribelets comprised just one village and others included several villages; in the latter cases, one village was usually recognized as more important than the others.

Chapter 5 : Native American slavery: Historians uncover a chilling chapter in U.S. history.

The Southeast. The Southeast culture area, north of the Gulf of Mexico and south of the Northeast, was a humid, fertile agricultural region. Many of its natives were expert farmers—they grew.

Photo illustration by Lisa Larson-Walker. Here are three scenes from the history of slavery in North America. In , a group of Pequot Indians, men and boys, having risen up against English colonists in Connecticut and been defeated, were sold to plantations in the West Indies in exchange for African slaves, allowing the colonists to remove a resistant element from their midst. In , an foot-long coffle of recently enslaved Sioux Indians, procured by a group of Cree, Assiniboine, and Monsoni warriors, arrived in Montreal, ready for sale to French colonists hungry for domestic and agricultural labor. And in , Cherokee Joseph Vann, expelled from his land in Georgia during the era of Indian removal , took at least 48 enslaved black people along with him to Indian Territory. By the s, Vann was said to have owned hundreds of enslaved black laborers, as well as racehorses and a side-wheeler steamboat. A reductive view of the American past might note two major, centuries-long historical sins: In recent years, a new wave of historians of American slavery has been directing attention to the ways these sins overlapped. The stories they have uncovered throw African slavery—still the narrative that dominates our national memory—into a different light, revealing that the seeds of that system were sown in earlier attempts to exploit Native labor. The record of Native enslavement also shows how the white desire to put workers in bondage intensified the chaos of contact, disrupting intertribal politics and creating uncertainty and instability among people already struggling to adapt to a radically new balance of power. Advertisement Before looking at the way Native enslavement happened on the local level really the only way to approach a history this fragmented and various , it helps to appreciate the sweep of the phenomenon. How common was it for Indians to be enslaved by Euro-Americans? Counting can be difficult, because many instances of Native enslavement in the Colonial period were illegal or ad hoc and left no paper trail. But historians have tried. A few of their estimates: Alan Gallay writes that between and , more Indians were exported into slavery through Charles Town now Charleston, South Carolina than Africans were imported. Brett Rushforth recently attempted a tally of the total numbers of enslaved, and he told me that he thinks 2 million to 4 million indigenous people in the Americas, North and South, may have been enslaved over the centuries that the practice prevailed—a much larger number than had previously been thought. The practice dates back to the earliest history of the European colonies in the future United States. Take the example of the Pequot who were enslaved in after clashing with the English. As Newell writes in a new book, *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery* , by the time the ship *Desire* transported the defeated Pequot men and boys to the Caribbean, colonists in New England, desperate for bodies and hands to supplement their own meager workforce, had spent years trying out various strategies of binding Native labor. During the Pequot War, which was initially instigated by struggles over trade and land among the Europeans, the Pequot, and rival tribes, colonists explicitly named the procurement of captives as one of their goals. Soldiers sent groups of captured Pequot to Boston and other cities for distribution, while claiming particular captured people as their own. Ther is one — that is the fairest and largest that I saw amongst them to whome I have given a coate to cloath her: It is my desire to have her for a servant — There is a little Squa that Stewart Calaot desireth — Lifetennant Davenport allso desireth one, to witt a tall one that hath 3 stroakes upon her stummach — Advertisement A few years after the conclusion of the war, in , the colonists of Massachusetts Bay passed the first formal law regulating slavery in English America, in a section of the longer document known as the Body of Liberties. Many, though not all, of the Native groups in the land that later became the United States and Canada practiced slavery before Europeans arrived. Many of those traditions also changed when tribes began to contend with the European presence. Contact pushed Native practices to change over time, as tribes contested, or adapted to, European demands. But, broadly speaking, Native types of enslavement were often about kinship, reproductive labor, and diplomacy, rather than solely the extraction of agricultural or domestic labor. The difference between these slaveries and European bondage of Africans was great. The Comanche exercised hegemony in part by

numerical superiority, and enslavement was part of that strategy. After a period of trauma, captives could, quite possibly, attain quasi-free status; their own children would be Comanches. Advertisement In his book *Bonds of Alliance*: Rushforth does not sell short the awfulness of these processes; still, he pointed out: Here are the names we know. The disconnect between Native uses of slavery and European understandings of the practice often made for miscommunication. In some places, ironically enough, Native groups themselves initiated the trade in captives to the Europeans. The French found the diplomatic function of it to be kind of confusing. Rushforth notes that the political equilibrium that prevailed before the arrival of Europeans had kept the Native slave trade minimal. And so that created these disincentives to go after captives, because there were all kinds of reasons you wanted to have peace, all kinds of reasons you wanted to have your economy running. Nearby tribes began to raid one another in earnest, often venturing far into the interior of the present-day United States to grab Pawnee and other Plains Indians. With French traders now offering goods and comestibles in exchange for captives, the old political balance was disrupted. And so they actually did it much more often. If a Native person was made captive by a rival tribe, a set of relatively predictable traditions governed his or her treatment. But after a Native captor sold a captive to a European, the person was swept into a global system. She, or he, was now a commodity. Rushforth points to instances of Apaches and other Plains peoples being sold, through Quebec, to the Caribbean. While the histories of Native enslavement and enslaving might seem to be separate spheres of study, they too are intertwined. Tribal groups could find themselves shifting from enslavers to enslaved, as their relationships to Euro-Americans, and with other tribes, changed over time. To illustrate this concept, Snyder points to the story of the Westo Indians, a group originally from around Lake Erie, who spoke an Iroquoian language. The remaining Westos were, themselves, sold to the Caribbean as slaves. There, a relatively small group of Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws held Africans in bondage. Historian Tiya Miles has written two histories of Cherokee slaveholding. Miles places the number of enslaved people held by Cherokees at around at the start of the 19th century and around 1, at the time of westward removal in Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws, she said, held around 3, slaves, across the three nations, as the 19th century began. This combination put such people in a position to expand their wealth, eventually operating large farms and plantations. Apaches and other Plains peoples were sold, through Quebec, to the Caribbean. Women were supposed to be in the household. And enslaved people were supposed to be out in those fields, helping to produce even more crops and eventually allowing the native man to have more of a supervisory role. Some white onlookers thought James Vann far too lenient in the way he socialized with the by one count 70 enslaved Africans who worked on his plantation. Still, he prospered, eventually owning to acres of land, a store, a tavern, and a trading post. The material success of slaveholders such as Vann did not, in the end, save the Cherokees from removal. The dehumanization of non-Europeans ultimately allowed white colonists to justify the killing of Southeastern Indians and the appropriation of their lands. When white demand for land prevailed, the Native population would inevitably lose. During removal, some wealthy Cherokees were able to take their enslaved people along. Many walked the Trail of Tears, along with the Natives who held them in bondage. But it meant that you had a leg up in rebuilding your wealth. Miles told me that she thought the historian should take these narratives with a grain of salt, pointing out that there are also many stories of Native slaveholders selling or punishing their black bondsmen. In her first book, however, Miles wrote about a Cherokee farmer who enslaved an African woman, lived with her for decades, and never freed her, despite her bearing his children. In that particular case, years of intimacy did not lead to emancipation. The complexities of the history of Native enslavement leave such clear distinctions behind. I wish that it were so simple. Yes, Europeans did have Native assistance in implementing their ends; they were also the ones who put Native tribes under the existential pressures that forced many Indians to sell fellow Natives into slavery. This tragedy does not make for so clear-cut a narrative as, say, the bravery of the fugitive African Americans who took the Underground Railroad to freedom. Yet it is a tragedy nonetheless. The many stories of Native slavery force us to think about the strategies Native people used to respond to the relentless European desire for labor. Some, like the Yamasee—who, with their allies, rose up to challenge British colonists in South Carolina in 1715—fought enslavement with violent resistance. Some, like the warriors who brought the long coffin of Sioux to Montreal

in , or the Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, and Choctaw who took their African slaves to Indian Country in the s, tried to adapt by becoming part of the system. Later, some worked within European law to challenge a tradition of Indian enslavement. Natives were thus part of the history of American slavery at its beginning, and at its end.

Chapter 6 : Native American Cultures - HISTORY

The mythologies of the indigenous peoples of North America comprise many bodies of traditional narratives associated with religion from a mythographical perspective. Indigenous North American belief systems include many sacred narratives. Such spiritual stories are deeply based in Nature and are rich with the symbolism of seasons, weather, plants, animals, earth, water, sky and fire.

Visit Website Did you know? According to the U. Census Bureau, there are about 4. The Inuit and Aleut had a great deal in common. Many lived in dome-shaped houses made of sod or timber or, in the North, ice blocks. They used seal and otter skins to make warm, weatherproof clothing, aerodynamic dogsleds and long, open fishing boats kayaks in Inuit; baidarkas in Aleut. By the time the United States purchased Alaska in , decades of oppression and exposure to European diseases had taken their toll: The native population had dropped to just 2,; the descendants of these survivors still make their home in the area today. In the Subarctic, travel was difficultâ€”toboggans, snowshoes and lightweight canoes were the primary means of transportationâ€”and population was sparse. In general, the peoples of the Subarctic did not form large permanent settlements; instead, small family groups stuck together as they traipsed after herds of caribou. They lived in small, easy-to-move tents and lean-tos, and when it grew too cold to hunt they hunkered into underground dugouts. Its inhabitants were members of two main groups: Iroquoian speakers these included the Cayuga, Oneida, Erie, Onondaga, Seneca and Tuscarora , most of whom lived along inland rivers and lakes in fortified, politically stable villages, and the more numerous Algonquian speakers these included the Pequot, Fox, Shawnee, Wampanoag, Delaware and Menominee who lived in small farming and fishing villages along the ocean. There, they grew crops like corn, beans and vegetables. Life in the Northeast culture area was already fraught with conflictâ€”the Iroquoian groups tended to be rather aggressive and warlike, and bands and villages outside of their allied confederacies were never safe from their raidsâ€”and it grew more complicated when European colonizers arrived. Meanwhile, as white settlement pressed westward, it eventually displaced both sets of indigenous people from their lands. The Southeast The Southeast culture area, north of the Gulf of Mexico and south of the Northeast, was a humid, fertile agricultural region. Many of its natives were expert farmersâ€”they grew staple crops like maize, beans, squash, tobacco and sunflowerâ€”who organized their lives around small ceremonial and market villages known as hamlets. Perhaps the most familiar of the Southeastern indigenous peoples are the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole, sometimes called the Five Civilized Tribes, who all spoke a variant of the Muskogean language. By the time the U. In , the federal Indian Removal Act compelled the relocation of what remained of the Five Civilized Tribes so that white settlers could have their land. The Cherokee called this frequently deadly trek the Trail of Tears. Before the arrival of European traders and explorers, its inhabitantsâ€”speakers of Siouan, Algonquian, Caddoan, Uto-Aztecan and Athabaskan languagesâ€”were relatively settled hunters and farmers. After European contact, and especially after Spanish colonists brought horses to the region in the 18th century, the peoples of the Great Plains became much more nomadic. Groups like the Crow, Blackfeet, Cheyenne, Comanche and Arapaho used horses to pursue great herds of buffalo across the prairie. The most common dwelling for these hunters was the cone-shaped teepee, a bison-skin tent that could be folded up and carried anywhere. Plains Indians are also known for their elaborately feathered war bonnets. As white traders and settlers moved west across the Plains region, they brought many damaging things with them: With settlers encroaching on their lands and no way to make money, the Plains natives were forced onto government reservations. The Southwest The peoples of the Southwest culture area, a huge desert region in present-day Arizona and New Mexico along with parts of Colorado , Utah , Texas and Mexico developed two distinct ways of life. Sedentary farmers such as the Hopi, the Zuni, the Yaqui and the Yuma grew crops like corn, beans and squash. Many lived in permanent settlements, known as pueblos, built of stone and adobe. These pueblos featured great multistory dwellings that resembled apartment houses. At their centers, many of these villages also had large ceremonial pit houses, or kivas. Other Southwestern peoples, such as the Navajo and the Apache, were more nomadic. They survived by hunting, gathering and raiding their more established

neighbors for their crops. Because these groups were always on the move, their homes were much less permanent than the pueblos. For instance, the Navajo fashioned their iconic eastward-facing round houses, known as hogans, out of materials like mud and bark. Spanish colonists and missionaries had enslaved many of the Pueblo Indians, for example, working them to death on vast Spanish ranches known as *encomiendas*. The Great Basin The Great Basin culture area, an expansive bowl formed by the Rocky Mountains to the east, the Sierra Nevadas to the west, the Columbia Plateau to the north, and the Colorado Plateau to the south, was a barren wasteland of deserts, salt flats and brackish lakes. Its people, most of whom spoke Shoshonean or Uto-Aztecan dialects the Bannock, Paiute and Ute, for example , foraged for roots, seeds and nuts and hunted snakes, lizards and small mammals. Because they were always on the move, they lived in compact, easy-to-build wickiups made of willow poles or saplings, leaves and brush. Their settlements and social groups were impermanent, and communal leadership what little there was was informal. After European contact, some Great Basin groups got horses and formed equestrian hunting and raiding bands that were similar to the ones we associate with the Great Plains natives. California Before European contact, the temperate, hospitable California culture area had more people—“an estimated , in the midth century—”than any other. It was also more diverse: Its estimated different tribes and groups spoke more spoke more than dialects. Despite this great diversity, many native Californians lived very similar lives. They did not practice much agriculture. Instead, they organized themselves into small, family-based bands of hunter-gatherers known as *tribelet*s. Inter-tribelet relationships, based on well-established systems of trade and common rights, were generally peaceful. Spanish explorers infiltrated the California region in the middle of the 16th century. The Northwest Coast The Northwest Coast culture area, along the Pacific coast from British Columbia to the top of Northern California, has a mild climate and an abundance of natural resources. As a result, unlike many other hunter-gatherers who struggled to eke out a living and were forced to follow animal herds from place to place, the Indians of the Pacific Northwest were secure enough to build permanent villages that housed hundreds of people apiece. Those villages operated according to a rigidly stratified social structure, more sophisticated than any outside of Mexico and Central America. Goods like these played an important role in the *potlatch*, an elaborate gift-giving ceremony designed to affirm these class divisions. Most of its people lived in small, peaceful villages along stream and riverbanks and survived by fishing for salmon and trout, hunting and gathering wild berries, roots and nuts. In the 18th century, other native groups brought horses to the Plateau. In , the explorers Lewis and Clark passed through the area, drawing increasing numbers of disease-spreading white settlers. By the end of the 19th century, most of the remaining Plateau Indians had been cleared from their lands and resettled in government reservations.

Chapter 7 : The Evolution of Indigenous Food Systems of North America | Dickinson College

No native writing system was known among North American Indians at the time of first European contact, unlike the Maya, Aztecs, Mixtecs, and Zapotecs of Mesoamerica who had native writing systems. Nevertheless, a number of writing systems for different North American Indian languages were developed as a result of the stimulus from European writing, some invented and introduced by white missionaries, teachers, and linguists.

First, at the time of European contact, all but the simplest indigenous cultures in North America had developed coherent religious systems that included cosmologies—creation myths, transmitted orally from one generation to the next, which purported to explain how those societies had come into being. They also venerated or placated a host of lesser supernatural entities, including an evil god who dealt out disaster, suffering, and death. Third and finally, the members of most tribes believed in the immortality of the human soul and an afterlife, the main feature of which was the abundance of every good thing that made earthly life secure and pleasant. An Iroquois funeral as observed by a French Jesuit missionary, early 1700s. At left: The Library Company of Philadelphia. Like all other cultures, the Indian societies of North America hoped to enlist the aid of the supernatural in controlling the natural and social world, and each tribe had its own set of religious observances devoted to that aim. Individuals tried to woo or appease powerful spiritual entities with private prayers or sacrifices of valuable items. These uncommon abilities included predicting the future and influencing the weather—matters of vital interest to whole tribes—but shamans might also assist individuals by interpreting dreams and curing or causing outbreaks of witchcraft. As even this brief account indicates, many key Indian religious beliefs and practices bore broad but striking resemblances to those current among early modern Europeans, both Catholic and Protestant. They, too, propitiated their deity with prayers and offerings and relied upon a specially trained clergy to sustain their societies during periods of crisis. Finally, the great majority of early modern Europeans feared witches and pondered the meaning of their dreams. Important as it is to appreciate the affinities between the religious cultures of Indians and early modern Europeans and Euro-Americans, there were real differences that must be kept in mind. The most important is that Indians did not distinguish between the natural and the supernatural. By contrast, Protestant and Catholic traditions were more inclined to emphasize the gulf that separated the pure, spiritual beings in heaven—God, the angels, and saints—from sinful men and women mired in a profane world filled with temptation and evil.

Guiding Student Discussion When you take up Native American religion in class, you could spend hours describing the specific beliefs and rituals of the major tribes spanning the North American continent, but this barrage of information might leave your students feeling overwhelmed and confused. It might be more profitable to begin by promising yourself to avoid any approach to Native American spirituality that is too exhaustively detailed. Thus you might start by describing the most salient and definitive characteristics of Indian spirituality and its most basic similarities to and differences from Euro-American Christianity, about which many students may also have only the vaguest notions, so your remarks will do double duty. Draw upon this specific information to build toward more sweeping statements about the general character of Native American religiosity. Consult these works for wonderful descriptions of Native American religious cultures and read from the following examples. Muskogeans along the Gulf of Mexico Joel W. Catawbas of the Carolinas James H. Iroquois of upper New York Daniel K. If you can find time to do more in class, your best students may be fascinated by examples of how native peoples adapted Christianity to their particular historical circumstances and needs. And having got them, what you do next is to offer some examples, as many as you can work into the time available, of how and why native peoples selectively borrowed from Christianity, picking and choosing certain elements of Catholic or Protestant belief and ritual which they then combined with traditional Indian practices. Many of the books cited in this essay describe the varying ways in which individual Native Americans and whole tribes participated in this process. For examples, you may read more on the following tribal groups. Indians did not simply replace one faith with another, nor did most converts cynically pretend to embrace Christian convictions. Instead, native beliefs and rituals gradually became intermixed with Christian elements, exemplifying a process known as religious syncretism—a

creative combination of the elements of different religious traditions yielding an entirely new religious system capable of commanding broad popular loyalties. *Essays on Acculturation and Cultural Persistence* [Athens: University of Georgia Press,]. In both versions, native peoples figured primarily as passive victims. More recent histories tell another story entirely, drawing attention to the enduring Indian resistance to white domination and, even more important, to the multiple forms of cultural adaptation and accommodation that took place on both sides of the moving frontier. Cambridge University Press, , which focuses on the Ohio valley and shows how a common cultural terrain gradually emerged as its indigenous peoples interacted with missionaries, soldiers, traders, and other settlers, first the French and later the English. To get the most from this book requires several hours of close reading, but every learned, lucidly written page repays the effort. Oxford University Press, The book sparkles with learning and wit, and its pages are filled with anecdotes that will delight your students. Oxford University Press, , which offers a rich array of selections exploring every facet of life, including religion, among the eastern Woodland tribes, as well as much helpful commentary in the introduction and prefaces to each selection. She holds a Ph. Heyrman is the author of *Commerce and Culture*:

Chapter 8 : Indigenous cultures of North America – Travel guide at Wikivoyage

This module discusses pre-contact trading systems between Indigenous peoples of North America with a focus on the geographical region of Canada. We examine the chronological events of contact with Europeans and the events leading up to, and during the fur trade.

Chapter 9 : Indigenous Peoples: North America

First, at the time of European contact, all but the simplest indigenous cultures in North America had developed coherent religious systems that included cosmologies—creation myths, transmitted orally from one generation to the next, which purported to explain how those societies had come into being.